

LEVEL 2 • C16

The red-wine toolkit

HOST PURCHASE + PREP SHEET

Use this before class. Bottle examples are teaching targets, not endorsements or stock guarantees. Check the current label and producer information; substitute by style when necessary.

What to buy

- Buy or reuse three wines: Syrah, Grenache, and Merlot.
- One bottle of each serves a group; 1 oz pours are enough. Comparable price and age improve the exercise.

Possible A/B choices

- Syrah: Saint Cosme Côtes-du-Rhône; Columbia Crest H3 Syrah; d'Arenberg The Footbolt Shiraz.
- Grenache: Borsao Tres Picos; Las Rocas Garnacha; d'Arenberg The Custodian Grenache.
- Merlot: reuse C14; Columbia Crest H3, Decoy, or Chateau Ste. Michelle Indian Wells.

AI WINE-CHOICE CHECK

Photograph this sheet and the front and back labels of each candidate bottle. Ask: *Using this class sheet, classify each bottle as Sample A, Sample B, neither, or uncertain. Cite visible label evidence and current producer technical information. Compare the grape or style, region, vintage, alcohol, sweetness, oak or production clues, and price where relevant. State what evidence is missing; do not infer style from region alone. Recommend the best A/B pair and explain why.*

Teach before you pour

- Syrah, Grenache, and Merlot have useful structural tendencies, but no grape has one fixed job.
- A structural role is what a component appears to contribute in this comparison. A varietal wine is labelled mainly for one grape; a blend combines components.
- Taste in one fixed order because repeated tannin and alcohol can change perception.

Set up

- Serve all three at the same cool room temperature and code them.
- Write privately before reveal; rank rather than identify first.
- This is the last structured flight—course work before party refills.

Host checklist

☐	Purchase or select samples
☐	Code and chill / temper samples
☐	Print one worksheet per participant
☐	Teach or read the primer before pouring or pressing play
☐	Set water, food, and spit cups
☐	Start the lesson before social refills

Hosting and reuse. Big-screen groups: seat everyone where they can pause and write; discuss after private notes and finish class work before refills. Reused bottles: close tightly, refrigerate, use later today or tomorrow, and replace if tired or oxidized. Updated 30 August 2026.